

**TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**February 27, 2008**

*Chair Knox White* called the Transportation Commission to order at 7:35 p.m. He noted that a quorum was not yet present, so the Commission would address several discussion items that did not require action.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Roll was called and the following recorded.

Members Present:

John Knox White  
Michael Krueger  
Robert McFarland  
Eric Schatmeier (arrived at 7:50 PM)

Members Absent:

Robb Ratto  
Srikant Subramaniam  
Nielsen Tam

Staff Present:

Obaid Khan, Supervising Civil Engineer  
Barry Bergman, Transportation Coordinator

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. January 23, 2008

*Chair Knox White* noted that a full quorum was not present to consider the minutes, and that they would be addressed at the next meeting if a quorum was present.

3. **AGENDA CHANGES**

*Chair Knox White* suggested that the agenda be taken in order until a quorum has been reached, if Item 7A comes up before that occurs, Item 7B would be heard.

4. **COMMISSION COMMUNICATIONS**

*Chair Knox White* noted that the State Senate had a new bill number assigned to address the clean-up language for the establishment of the Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA), but no actual language was associated with it. He noted that the TC had requested that Sen. Perata's staff be on hand for a public meeting regarding this matter.

*Chair Knox White* inquired what the City's policy was regarding parking in red zones and across sidewalks. He believed the City should investigate an education campaign regarding the new crosswalk lights. He has seen almost no change in driver behavior regarding the lighted crosswalks.

## **5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Open public hearing.**

There were no speakers.

### **Close public hearing.**

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

### **6A. Update on I-880/Broadway/Jackson Project Study Report.**

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report, and updated the I-880/Broadway/Jackson project. He summarized the history of the project, and displayed and described the proposed arterial changes and signals in detail. Staff was concerned that any change to the historical structures would cause structural and environmental issues. The speed required for the right turn would have to be no more than 25 mph. Caltrans did not support traffic slowing down abruptly coming out of the Posey Tube, which led to further options being studied for traffic coming out of the Tube in Oakland. A left turn onto the existing one-way Sixth Street was suggested, with further improvements intended for Sixth Street; he noted that option showed great promise. The feasibility study suggested that for northbound traffic on I-880, the Broadway off-ramp be eliminated and a new ramp be installed at Webster Street, which would improve access to Alameda by allowing people to make a left turn into the Webster Tube entrance. He noted that the final report was due to be completed in Summer 2008.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* joined the Commission on the dais. He inquired what specific problem the project was intended to solve, and noted that while he used it during off-peak hours, he understood that it was cramped and awkward.

*Staff Khan* replied that the northbound Jackson Street on ramp has a weave as it comes onto the I-880 freeway; and reduction in any traffic trying to use Jackson Street will improve the safety on the freeway. He added that the City was looking into further improvements to provide better circulation along the corridor near Sixth Street. He noted that by 2030, congestion in the Tubes would be substantially increased. With respect to Chinatown, the traffic would be moved away from the pedestrian concentration at Seventh and Harrison. He noted that there was a fatality at Seventh and Harrison, and that this was a serious concern for the Chinatown community.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether this plan would help traffic moving southbound, as well as at the weave. He further inquired whether there had been any investigation into shifting the traffic by the Senior Center onto arterials without having to cut the corner.

*Staff Khan* replied that the hook ramp created the benefit of creating an arterial in front of the Pulte building. The City was interested in the alternative because of the importance of the southbound access. There were constraints with respect to the entrance to the Pulte building.

No action was taken.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7A. Residents' appeal to Proposed Changes to Central Avenue**

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report, and detailed the background of this matter. He noted that parents and school officials had submitted concerns regarding circulation and drop-off zones in front of the school. Parents had been concerned about double-parking during the school drop-off time, people blocking entrances and children's safety. Staff's major concern was separating the vehicular traffic from the children exiting the cars. He noted that one goal was to remove parking on the west of the school driveway; he displayed the loading zone area at the school on the overhead screen. He noted that if the white zone were to be moved onto school property, the cars would also be moved. The double-parked cars would be addressed by removing the parking altogether west of the school entrance. The third action was to create a one-hour parking zone in front of the zone where an unrestricted zone had previously existed. He noted that cars could not remain in a white zone unattended. He added that it aided children with special needs and their parents.

*Staff Khan* noted that his discussions with the school indicate that they have seen substantial improvements in this area as a result of the changes implemented to date. They also wanted to create a program at the school that would allow teachers or volunteers to receive the children, open the door and get them out of the cars, which would improve the traffic flow. Staff encouraged the principal and the parents to implement this. Staff conducted a survey of the parking supply as compared to demand. Christina Hanson, a resident, sent a survey to staff that she conducted at approximately 30 minute intervals, and staff conducted another survey between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Staff found that if one-hour parking was installed, the smallest number of available parking spaces at 9 a.m. was five spaces; there were 16 spaces available at 3 p.m. He noted that staff's intention was to improve traffic circulation, address children's safety, take the vehicular traffic away from access of children getting into the school, address access for special needs children by providing some parking for parents to enter the school, and to improve parking conditions by removing several red curbs to provide additional parking spaces. The striping would be redesigned to allow the parking at that location.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether any of the red curbs were in place to provide visibility, or whether it was due to the striping, *Staff Khan* replied that the existing red curb at Fifth and Central would be removed because it had been installed for visibility reasons when there was no stop sign. They wanted to maintain some visibility at the signalized intersection of Ballena and Central, but there was a substantial amount of red curb that could be addressed to accommodate the parking configuration.

*Staff Khan* noted that the City had coordinated with local Eagle Scouts to perform some of the striping. In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner McFarland* whether the curb would be painted, *Staff Khan* replied that it would not be painted and because it was time-limited, there would be signs placed at those locations.

A discussion of the details of the various parking zones ensued.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired which of the safe routes to school had been addressed. *Staff Khan* replied that the school did not yet have a safe routes to school map, and that Public Works began creating those maps last year. This year, the plan was to work on the West End for this school, Chipman, Encinal High and Ruby Bridges. He noted that it generally took time to engage the community and the parents, and staff felt that the drop-off zone would enable to parents to understand what was going on. Staff felt that the parents would be encouraged to continue their support to create a robust program to allow the drop-off zone, and then a walking school bus or a bicycle train.

### **Open public hearing.**

Ms. Chris Hanson, 461 Central, appellant, noted that this had been a frustrating situation for herself and her neighbors. She felt the City had mishandled this process, and added that she had been a municipal employee for over 15 years, including for Alameda, and that she understood the public process and rationale. She noted that the length of the curb in front of the school was supposed to be a green curb with seven spaces for one-hour parking at 7 a.m. She noted that the situation was very stressful, and had tried to get information from Alan Ta, junior engineer with Public Works; she had been told it would be done. She was later told by Public Works Director Matt Naclerio that the notifications would be re-sent. She did not believe the City should cater to a specific interest group without considering the concerns of all the neighbors. She appreciated the marked improvement with the traffic flow, and noted that the week the school had monitors on duty, there was also improvement. She noted that the speed of the through traffic was excessive. She noted that there were already spaces available at the peak usage hour, and did not understand why there must be time-limited parking spaces if a minimum of five spaces were available at all times.

Ms. Hanson displayed photos showing that seven spaces were available. She noted that the neighboring houses were built in 1910, and did not generally have garages; in addition, there was limited driveway and off-street parking. She added that most of the neighbors had to park on the street, and that many neighbors took public transportation. She did not believe that the neighbors should have to move their cars before going to work in the morning. She noted that many people drove compact cars, and suggested that the curb be repainted for compact spaces. She suggested that if the school wanted to add three spaces of private staff parking, they could add three more spaces in that location because the concrete at the back of the school was already being utilized. She suggested that some of the staff members park further down so three spaces could be made green.

Ms. Hanson distributed three letters from her neighbors to the Commission.

Ms. Robin Hewitt echoed Ms. Hanson's comments and frustration. She expressed concern that about growing congestion in the Tube, and noted that Alameda was losing parking spaces as it continues to grow. She noted that apartment buildings have fewer vacancies and more cars as the housing market crisis continues. She believed the parking enforcement at schools should have stronger enforcement. She has observed illegal U-turns, double parking and no place for children to cross the street except at the intersections of Central at Fourth and Fifth Streets.

### **Close public hearing.**

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that Ms. Hanson's letter, parking counts and photos showed many empty spaces. He inquired why it would create a hardship if the other spaces were taken away in that case. Ms. Hanson replied that from the hours of 8 to 3, she demonstrated that there was ample parking. She inquired why there would be limited parking spaces during a time there was ample parking. She noted that in the event she did not have to leave her house until 9 a.m., she would have to get up earlier to move her car during the school drop-off hours before it was 8 a.m., when the limited parking started. She did not believe the neighbors should be subjected to that inconvenience.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired about the issue of special needs children, and whether it was a different scenario from a handicapped parking zone. He further inquired whether those children must be escorted to school, and whether the staff parking lot could be used for that purpose. *Staff Khan* replied that the handicapped parking inside the parking lot could be used. The school previously had two disabled parking spaces (blue and green lots on the overhead map), and they allow the children to be escorted to school without leaving the car unattended on the street. Staff believed this addressed the needs of the parents and the school.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired about the appellant's suggestion of creating more space within the off-street parking lot in order to create temporary parking for people going into the school without taking street parking spaces. *Staff Khan* noted that the parking lot was configured for employees or people who would be there a long time.

*Chair Knox White* indicated that he understood the concern about having the drop-off zone just prior to the entrance to the school, and asked if the spaces could be converted to on-street parking. *Staff Khan* replied if the spaces were not occupied, that this area would continue to function as a drop-off zone, and could lead to double-parking in that area.

*Chair Knox White* stated that did not make sense to him, and was concerned that the Police Department enforces parking restrictions inconsistently, including near schools, and that having specific designations for each section of curb may lead to further problems if it can't be enforced. Since both the staff report and Ms. Hanson's survey seem to indicate that there is sufficient parking in the area, he did not believe it was necessary in this case to carve out so many specific uses for each part of the right of way, and believed that the need for parents accessing the school should not be prioritized over residents accessing their houses. He was surprised that so much staff time was available to address parking issues outside of schools, but not for walking and biking issues around schools, and that a majority of the students live within

walking or biking distance of the school. He noted that a lot of time has been spent on school drop-off zones. He suggested enacting an ordinance to enforce double fines in school zones, as is allowed by the state. He understood that staff had a difficult job in balancing many wants and desires in the City. He did not see any need to remove the parking at Paden school, and suggested adding a crosswalk in front of the school across Central Ave. He suggested encouraging walking to school, and strongly encouraged the neighboring residents to be notified of actions such as this near their neighboring school. He would like the personnel manual to include a requirement to inform the public of changes happening near their homes. He noted that residents should realize that it was not always possible to park directly in front of their house or school.

*Staff Khan* noted that it was important for staff to work with the school principal, parents, school district and police. He noted that additional Police staff had been hired to increase enforcement in front of the schools, primarily for the children's safety. He noted that the intention was to remove the children from the path of traffic. He noted that they were working with the school to develop a safe routes to school map.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* echoed *Chair Knox White's* comments, and did not see any compelling reason for the one-hour parking zone in front of the school. He noted that when his disabled child was school-age, she often took AC Transit when she was old enough. He noted that he had to fight for parking places like everyone else for parent-teacher conferences. He did not see a reason to grant a parking space for someone who would be at the school for an hour or less. He noted that people should be able to find some other place to park, or use the off-street lot, and did not agree with the staff report in that regard.

*Commissioner Krueger* did not see a compelling need for the time-limited parking, but was concerned about the traffic flow and safety. He inquired about other safety and circulation issues apart from double parking. He believed that parking should be designated in the correct way, whether or not the restrictions were enforced.

*Staff Khan* displayed the circulation map, and replied that in the morning, parents used the white zone to drop off, and other cars would stop in the middle of the street. He noted that the access was changed to eliminate other cars impeding the access.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether compact spaces would be possible, *Staff Khan* replied that the City did not have any ordinance for compact spaces. He added that the Commission could recommend to the City Council that an ordinance for compact spaces be developed.

*Chair Knox White* noted that if there did not seem to be a need for a restriction which was not being enforced anyway, he did not believe it made sense to have such a restriction. He believed the City's roadways should interact with the land uses.

<p><i>Commissioner Krueger</i> moved to accept the staff recommendations, with the modification to remove time-limited parking, and retaining the no-stopping zone during school hours. Motion dies for lack of a second.</p>
---

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* regarding double fines in school zones, *Staff Khan* replied that that law would sunset this year. *Chair Knox White* suggested that double fines in school zones be considered.

*Commissioner Krueger* suggested that the road diet issue be examined by staff.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* moved to accept the staff recommendations to uphold the appeal, with the modification to remove time-limited parking. Two of the three white parking spaces would be preserved, and no stopping would be allowed in one space closest to the driveway from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. *Commissioner McFarland* seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0.

## **7B. Conceptual Design of Mariner Square Drive Realignment and Park and Ride Lot/Transit Hub**

*Staff Khan* presented the staff report, and displayed and described a conceptual design of a proposed realignment of existing Mariner Square Drive to a former railroad right-of-way, and construction of a transit hub in the vicinity of the Posey Tube entrance. The existing Mariner Square Drive would be used to provide buses with direct access to the Posey Tube. The project includes a Class I separate bicycle/pedestrian path that would provide connectivity to the Bay Trail and the Posey Tube, a future estuary crossing for transit, bicyclists and pedestrians that is currently under study, and the proposed Cross Alameda Trail. He noted that there is the potential to explore shared parking opportunities with adjacent businesses and property owners. He noted that electronic bike lockers were being considered, and that bus line modifications could be considered to bring the W and 19 buses to access this site. Staff requested the Commissioners' comments about pedestrian, bicycle and transit circulation. In addition, there has been preliminary interest expressed in constructing a hotel on an adjacent City-owned site, so staff also invited comments from the Commissioners on the potential for the transit hub and potential hotel to share parking, given the needs of these types of uses. He discussed that proposed costs for each part of the proposal, and noted that the City is including this in the analysis for the TMP, since if the project is included in the General Plan it will facilitate getting access to funding.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether the amenities include bus shelters and seating, *Staff Khan* replied that shelters would be part of this, and the City may also look into including electronic Next Bus signs to provide real-time information about transit vehicles arrival times.

In response to an inquiry by *Commissioner Krueger* whether the intersection of Atlantic Ave. and Webster Street would be served, *Staff Bergman* replied that one option that could be considered is rerouting the W to serve the transit hub, but maintaining the existing Line O route, which is heavily used at Atlantic and Webster.

*Commissioner Krueger* inquired whether there was a way to serve this area, as well as Atlantic and Webster, *Staff Khan* replied that there could be a shuttle service to BART offered by AC Transit. Staff intended to address the issues regarding the congestion pressure on the Tubes, and

City Council has shown strong interest in discussing shuttle service.

*Chair Knox White* inquired how well the characteristics of this location match up with best practices for a Park and Ride lot, *Staff Khan* replied that staff was looking into that issue. Availability of land and access to the Posey Tube are very attractive features of this site, but that other consideration must be evaluated as well.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that in the Long Range Transit Plan, the College of Alameda was identified as a location for a transit hub. He asked if this project would be pursued as one of several transit hubs, or if it would preclude hubs at other sites. *Staff Khan* responded that this site could potentially enhance access to the college, and there may even be an opportunity to pursue funding jointly with the college. He estimated that the distance from the college to the transit hub is less than 1500 feet.

### **Open public hearing.**

Hussein Khomani noted that he ran a daycare at 2100 Mariner Square Drive with 125 children, and he was very concerned about the safety of the children if this proposal were to be implemented. He was opposed to the proposal, and believed that general pedestrian safety would be impacted as well, especially in the morning and afternoon when 125 parents dropped off and picked up their children. He noted that the first dropoff was at 6:30 a.m., and children were picked up at 6:00 p.m., and believed the pollution and noise would affect the children. He was concerned about the elevation of the area, which was almost five feet above his property. He did not believe \$12 million was sufficient to resolve the elevation. *Staff Khan* responded that as part of the proposal, new pipes would address the drainage issues.

Philip Thorn noted that he lived in the Heritage Bay complex, that his children attended the nearby daycare center, and that his office location would also be impacted. He would like the Transportation Commission to be aware that the daycare center was a dedicated facility for the children, with an outdoor area facing the proposed road. He was very concerned about the noise and pollution impacts on the children, and noted that there were regular accidents on that road. He believed it would be very dangerous to have the road with a thin fence that close to the playground. He added that there were regular accidents at the Tube, and that cars would not be able to evade the accidents with the new plan. He suggested that more money be allocated to mitigate flooding. He did not believe a four-lane road would be appropriate next to the daycare center. He inquired about the timeframe of this proposed project, *Staff Khan* replied that funding would not occur earlier than 2012.

Bill Smith noted that he had ridden his bicycle in the area for 15 years, and expressed concern about the speed in the Tubes. He inquired where the 1,500 cars coming from the Base were. *Staff Bergman* noted that was from Marina Village Parkway. Mr. Smith noted that he generally saw buses, not cars. *Staff Khan* described the route he had inquired about. Mr. Smith expressed concern about the truck traffic near the daycare center.



## **Close public hearing.**

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that this kind of proposal concerns him as a transit user. He believed this project was an example of the best of intentions yielding the worst of results. He noted that it took 2½ to 3 hours for a transit bus to get from Santa Rosa to San Francisco because the bus must exit the freeway and wait for local transit. He added that it took twice as long for a transit user to make the trip than a driver in a car. He believed that routing the San Francisco buses to the transit hub site would be a significant diversion of a normally rapid route. He believed it would only benefit users of the park and ride lot, at the expense users further down the line. He inquired why shuttles were discussed when the AC Transit service was good. He believed that both directions must be served without delay, and that this would be a deterrence to transit ridership. He believed this would work only if it can be served efficiently without serious sacrifices in running time.

*Commissioner Krueger* echoed *Commissioner Schatmeier's* concerns. He noted that while the idea seemed to be good, the location was not a hub of any kind. While it may be easy for the City to build on this site, he did not believe it was the right thing to do. He noted that he liked the queue jump concept for lines that we know are successful, not necessarily with reconfigured routes.

In response to an inquiry by *Chair Knox White* whether Mariner Square Drive was on a map, similar to Mitchell Moseley, *Staff Khan* replied that it was currently included in the Draft Transportation Element.

*Chair Knox White* shared the Commissioners' concerns. He believed the number of riders served would have minimal impact on Tube traffic. He was concerned that the City may need to reroute several bus lines, which would add run time even if funds were obtained. He believed this proposal would be a mistake to implement.

*Staff Khan* noted that there would be funding from developers from Alameda Landing and Alameda Point, and that those developments triggered the need for this proposal.

*Chair Knox White* believed the bus routes should be planned before the transit hub was located, not the other way around, and was concerned that multiple bus lines might be reconfigured to serve the project. He believed that four lanes for Mariner Square Drive seemed excessive, and would be apprehensive about adopting this plan into the Transportation Element. He would like to see the Alameda Landing EIR numbers in order to comment further. He noted that because the daycare center is located so close to the Posey Tube entrance, it is already heavily impacted by traffic. He also questioned the location of the project in terms of adjacent land uses, as there are no easy pedestrian connections to Marina Village or Alameda Landing. While he supported the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, he expressed concern that if the road is constructed to be four lanes that people would want to use it for biking and walking. While this plan was

very conceptual, he believed it would be important to stay in contact with the daycare owner, since they owned the building. He stated that this may not be the right location for a transit hub, and it is not the right time to be pursuing it, that there are many existing pressing needs for transit in the City.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that regarding the realigned road, he would like to see more detail, and added that shortening the route from Alameda Landing to the Tube made sense. He also believed that this use of the railroad right of way made sense. He did not believe that a four-lane route may be necessary.

*Chair Knox White* did not see a transit hub with commercial spaces being a good match for shared parking. He would like to see this proposal again when the traffic model was done, with more specific numbers.

*Staff Khan* noted that he would add the speakers to the email list for this proposal.

### **Commission Communications (cont.)**

*Chair Knox White* noted that the federal grant for bus shelters that the City had applied for was denied.

*Staff Bergman* noted that those funds were generally earmarked and were competitively awarded. Staff would continue to track that issue.

*Commissioner Schatmeier* noted that the bike path near Mount Trashmore was overgrown with hedges, and would like it to be trimmed back.

*Chair Knox White* noted that the bus route map at the southwest corner of Santa Clara and High was covered with graffiti.

*Commissioner Krueger* noted that he had complained about it, and was told that all complaints about graffiti must be routed through AC Transit. *Staff Bergman* indicated that the City is responsible for graffiti on shelters, but that AC Transit is responsible for other bus route maps posted at bus stops.

*Chair Knox White* noted that there was broken glass at the shelter at Webster and Santa Clara, as well as Willow and Santa Clara.

### **8. Staff Communications**

*Staff Bergman* provided an update on the Estuary Crossing Feasibility Study, funded by a \$100,000 grant from ACTIA. ARUP was hired as the consultant, and Caltrans District 4 would provide access to its on-call outreach consultant. Oakland has also contributed to the project as well. Several community meetings had been scheduled in Chinatown (April 10) and in Alameda (April 12).

*Staff Bergman* noted that the March ILC would be rescheduled.

*Staff Bergman* noted that the City received a grant to install bike lockers and racks at the Harbor Bay Ferry Terminal, as well as near key commercial areas.

*Staff Bergman* noted that paratransit program enrollment had increased by 25% during the past year, and that enhanced marketing was being undertaken.

*Staff Khan* noted that the Ecopass program was being finalized with AC Transit for all City employees. The program is anticipated to be in place by early summer.

*Staff Bergman* updated the bus stop improvements which would be implemented in conjunction with AC Transit.

*Staff Khan* noted that a Park Street redevelopment project was being initiated, and a charrette would be presented at the Alameda Library.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

G:\pubworks\LT\TRANSPORTATION\COMMITTEES\TC\2008\032608\packet\022708minutes-draft.doc